

# **2010 Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership Service Plan**

## **California Tahoe Conservancy/ Tahoe Baikal Institute**

Title of position: **Environmental Education Programs Assistant**

Host Site: **Tahoe-Baikal Institute & California Tahoe Conservancy**

Site Supervisor: **Jon Green, Tahoe-Baikal Institute US Programs Coordinator**

Position Location: **1061 Third St., South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150 and Fredericks' Site on Fallen Leaf Lake, near South Lake Tahoe, CA**

Service Start date: **January 18, 2010, Service End date: December 31, 2010**

Service Hours: **1700 hours minimum**

### **Program Background**

The Tahoe-Baikal Institute's (TBI) mission is to connect passionate people with formative programming at two of the world's premiere freshwater ecosystems, Lake Tahoe in the Sierra Nevada and Lake Baikal in eastern Siberia, in order to foster a future where communities worldwide thrive in concert with their environment. The Tahoe-Baikal Institute's flagship program, our Summer Environmental Exchange (SEE), is an experiential, place-based educational program focusing on watershed conservation, sustainable development, and cultural exchange at Lake Baikal in Russia and at Lake Tahoe in the USA. During approximately 10 weeks from mid-June to late-August, participants enjoy a unique opportunity to learn about the natural and cultural history of the Tahoe and Baikal watersheds, as well as current initiatives in environmental science and policy. Eighteen participants spend five weeks at Lake Baikal (Siberia, Russia) and five weeks at Lake Tahoe (California and Nevada) discovering other cultures in a way that cannot be replicated in a classroom, learning from each other in formal and informal settings by leading discussions, sharing presentations, and living together for a summer. In addition to the SEE program, TBI organizes at least one other international exchange each year and provides on-going support to our environmental partners at Lake Baikal.

The California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) is an independent State agency within the Resources Agency of the State of California. It was established in its present form by State law in 1984. Its jurisdiction extends only to the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Conservancy is not a regulatory agency. It was established to develop and implement programs through acquisitions and site improvements to improve water quality in Lake Tahoe, preserve the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the region, provide public access, preserve wildlife habitat areas, and manage and restore lands to protect the natural environment. The Conservancy owns approximately 6,000 acres within the Lake Tahoe Basin. In addition to managing and restoring these lands, the Conservancy works with other public land owners to implement a variety of projects throughout the California side of the Tahoe Basin. The Wildlife Habitat Enhancement and Stream Environment Zone/Watershed Programs implement watershed restoration projects to restore natural hydrologic functions, enhance habitat for wildlife and fisheries, and improve water quality. Currently there are several large-scale restoration projects in various stages of planning, implementation, and pre or post project monitoring.

## 2010 TBI Program Goals

- In 2010, the Tahoe-Baikal Institute will continue to work to make our Summer Environmental Exchange world-class place-based development experience, which will have a lasting influence on the lives and the decision-making processes of our program participants. In working towards this goal, we have identified several objectives for this year:
- Refine our program syllabus and get the program listed as an official course at one of our partner Universities: UNR, UC Davis, or University of the
- Further refine our program evaluation methods, to insure that we are gathering meaningful information from both participants and project leaders about the effectiveness of our program.
- Ensure that learning goals of the SEE program are being met by refining and utilizing a tracking document that will match activities with goals;
- Increase organizational capacity by 40%;
- Reinvigorate alumni network through newsletters, events, and other campaigns.
- Obtain updated contact information for an additional 30% of our alumni (we currently have info for roughly 30% of the alumni);
- Introduce two new programs (a training program for Tahoe Agency professionals and an Agency/Community Outreach Event at Baikal);
- Focus on skill-building within our staff.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS ASSISTANT SERVICE PLAN

### Member Training (300 hrs)

Date	Time Est.	Projects and Tasks
ongoing	140 hrs	Attend Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps trainings, events, conference calls, and meetings.
Jan – Feb	30 hrs	Orientation to TBI and overview of the structure and operations of a small non-profit organization. Also, orientation to the Summer Environmental Exchange: training will be based on the Program Manual developed by the past 5 Programs Assistants, and will familiarize the member with the SEE Program and the necessary steps for coordinating program logistics. Steps covered include (but are not limited to) exchange participant selection, travel arrangements, timeline of communication with program participants prior to the program, and program activities.
Jan – Feb	10 hrs	Orientation to the California Tahoe Conservancy's mission, goals, and program objectives. Overview of restoration projects and skills needed as part of service plan. Review program guidelines, and review project plans & reports
Jan – June	10 hrs	In order to better communicate with our exchange program participants, it is ideal for members of our staff who spend a large percentage of our time with the participants to learn and practice basic Russian language skills. Throughout the winter and spring, our office will be having

		weekly Russian language practice sessions <b>(.5 hour per week, 20 weeks January through June)</b>
May	10	Fredericks' Care-taker training: Because of the age and character of the facilities at the Fredericks' site, there are a number of maintenance tasks that need to be conducted regularly and in precise, particular ways: for example, testing of the drinking water.
Jan – Dec weekly	80	Attend weekly coordination meetings with site supervisor and weekly TBI staff meetings. Attend 4 TBI Board of Directors meetings throughout year. Attend CTC Natural Resources Watershed/Wildlife program meetings as needed to ensure member is aware of and appropriately integrated into restoration program activities.
ongoing	20 hrs	Attend other trainings as appropriate. Potential trainings could, Lake Tahoe Community College courses, in house trainings, relevant conferences about environmental education, or other trainings as funding and schedule allow.

### **Watershed Restoration and Assessment (540 hrs)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Est.</b>	<b>Projects and Tasks</b>
Jan – Dec Approx. monthly	80 hrs.	<b>Groundwater Monitoring</b> Collect, download, and organize ground water data from existing monitoring wells to determine pre-project baseline conditions for several restoration projects on the Upper Truckee River.
Jan - June	20 hrs.	<b>Cold and Trout Creeks Adaptive Management</b> Conduct regular photo monitoring of Cold Creek & Trout Creek adaptive management project. Report on flooding conditions, and identify any new beaver dams and/or bank erosion. Monitor the effectiveness of a pond leveler installed to mitigate beaver caused flooding.
April – May & Sep -Oct	80 hrs.	<b>Native Riparian Vegetation Propagation</b> Collect spring and fall cuttings from native riparian vegetation (aspen, cottonwoods, alders, & dogwoods) and propagate in containers. Maintain greenhouse and irrigation system. Record data on survivorship.
May- June	30 hrs.	<b>CTC/ TBI Restoration Project</b> Coordinate planning and execution of CTC/TBI restoration work days, which are a part of the SEE program. Assist with organizing, lead groups or projects, and participate in restoration work on CTC land with TBI participants. Document with photographs the conditions of the site before and after restoration

June	20 hrs.	<b>Fredericks' Site Restoration Project</b> Work with TBI Executive Director and US Forest Service Special Use-Permit Administrator to identify needed restoration work to be done on the Frederick's Cabin site. Coordinate with the Forest Service to obtain any needed permits for this work. Coordinate with the California Tahoe Conservancy staff to obtain necessary equipment for this work. Co-lead TBI participants in a restoration workday on the site.
Jul- Aug.	60 hrs.	<b>Vegetation Monitoring</b> Perform riparian vegetation monitoring to assess restoration effectiveness including vegetative cover, meadow biomass, point intercept transects, and/or riparian community mapping. Duties will include managing all data and may involve refining protocols.
Jun - Jul	90 hrs.	<b>SEE Program Research Projects</b> Help coordinate the planning and execution of five two-week long, hands-on research projects for the SEE program participants. Plan informational meetings for potential project leaders, solicit project proposals, and help leaders of selected projects design ideal projects for the SEE program audience. Serve as an assistant or co-leader on one of the five projects, as needed.
Aug - Nov	60 hrs.	<b>Watershed Assessment and Geomorphic Monitoring</b> Conduct geomorphic sampling under the general direction of Conservancy staff including: Surveying predefined cross-sections and longitudinal profiles on Trout Creek and Cold Creek in support of post-project adaptive management, monitoring erosion pins on Blackwood Creek, performing qualitative assessments of streams on Conservancy land, and surveying cross-sections and longitudinal profiles on Blackwood Creek and Upper Truckee River in support of pre-project monitoring. Work will include monumenting and GPSing new cross-sections, and organizing all data.
Aug - Nov	40 hrs.	<b>Stream Restoration</b> Conduct riparian restoration and streambank stabilization using willow staking, brush boxes, and other bioengineering techniques. Projects will include adaptive management of Cold and Trout Creeks, spot treatments on Blackwood and Ward Creeks, and restoration of other degraded streams on Conservancy land.
Aug - Dec	60 hrs.	<b>Trail Mapping and Restoration</b> GPS data collection and mapping of user created trails and other features in support of restoration project development. Download data, create maps, and prioritize trail segments for restoration or maintenance. Develop restoration plan for trail rehabilitation under general direction from technical experts, and work with Conservancy staff to schedule restoration. Perform trail restoration or maintenance to reduce erosion.

### Environmental Education (640 hrs)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Est.</b>	<b>Projects and Tasks</b>
Jan - April	30 hrs.	<b>Community Paddle Event</b> Assist Lake Tahoe Water Trail Committee with organizing spring community paddle. Duties to include event organization, volunteer coordination, and securing interpretive speakers & designing educational materials. <i>(30 hrs Educ., 30 hours Vol. Recr.—60 hrs total)</i>
Jan - Mar & Oct - Dec	30 hrs.	<b>Interpretive Kayak Maps</b> Assist Lake Tahoe Water Trail Committee with preparation of Lake Tahoe day trip maps. Duties to include research and preparation of educational information, graphics development, and project & volunteer coordination. <i>(30 hrs Educ., 15 hours Vol. Recr.—45 hrs total)</i>
ongoing	30 hrs.	<b>Community Outreach</b> Continue to develop TBI's "outreach kit" with prepared visual materials for various audiences, including potential applicants/participants, donors, and the community at large. Use these materials to represent TBI at community events and festivals, to give presentations at colleges and universities, etc. Perform outreach and training on Lake Tahoe-Lake Baikal connections and the importance of international collaboration at events sponsored by TBI and other organizations. Recruit volunteers to help with these outreach events when appropriate.
Jan - April	360 hrs	<b>Annual Summer Environmental Exchange</b> Assist with planning the schedule for the 5 weeks that TBI's Summer Environmental Exchange group spends in California. Arrange appointments for the group to meet with local policy makers, scientific researchers, environmental advocates and community business leaders. Assist with logistics of participant travel, including researching plane fares, and mapping directions/ routes for ground transportation. Assist Program Director with coordinating program details and logistics. Contribute to development of SEE program curriculum, syllabus and itinerary.
Apr - May	30 hrs	<b>Update of the Tahoe Agency Reader and the Tahoe Reader</b> Each year, TBI distributes preparatory reading materials to the SEE participants prior to their arrival in Tahoe for the start of the program; one document (the Tahoe Agency Reader) outlines the local agencies and organizations working in the basin and each group's responsibilities, while the other document provides background information about Lake Tahoe's ecology and environmental issues. Both of these documents need to be updated annually.
May - Oct	80 hrs.	<b>Fredericks' Cabin Caretaking and Interpretation</b> Many of the Tahoe-Baikal Institute's programs at Tahoe are hosted at the U.S. Forest Service Fredericks' site located on the shore of Fallen Leaf Lake. The Tahoe-Baikal Institute has a 20-year special use permit to operate the site from May through October. Maintain site in proper

		condition to support the organizations educational activities and educate visitors (including but not limited to TBI participants) about the history of the site, TBI's partnership with the USFS, and the ecology of the site.
Oct - Dec	80 hrs.	<b>Educational events and materials specifically for TBI alumni</b> Plan two alumni events throughout the year (such as Alumni Weekends or field trips) selecting topics and themes that will compliment and build on the skills and knowledge acquired during their initial TBI experience (most often, the SEE program).

### **Volunteer Recruitment & Support (220 hrs)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Est.</b>	<b>Projects and Tasks</b>
Jan - April	30 hrs.	<b>Community Paddle</b> Assist Lake Tahoe Water Trail Committee with organizing spring community paddle. Duties to include event organization, volunteer coordination, and securing interpretive speakers & educational materials. <i>(30 hrs Educ., 30 hours Vol. Recr.—60 hrs total)</i>
Jan - Mar & Oct - Dec	15 hrs.	<b>Interpretive Kayak Maps</b> Assist Lake Tahoe Water Trail Committee with preparation of Lake Tahoe day trip maps. Duties to include research and preparation of educational information, graphics development, and project & volunteer coordination. <i>(30 hrs Educ., 15 hours Vol. Recr.—45 hrs total)</i>
Apr - May	24 hrs.	<b>Fredericks' Volunteer Work Day</b> Plan annual Spring Work-Day to prepare Fredericks' Cabin for summer season. Recruit 30 or more volunteers for tasks such as removal of shutters, painting inside and outside, cleaning inside the house, and clean-up of the grounds. Obtain and organize all supplies for workday. Act as volunteer coordinator during workday, assigning volunteers to new tasks as previous ones are completed.
Apr- June	80 hrs.	<b>SEE Program Volunteer Recruitment</b> Recruit and support approximately 75 volunteers connected to the SEE Program, who assist with various restoration, monitoring, and educational activities. Also, recruit volunteers to host home stays for participants. (See above for more details about the SEE Program.)
Oct - Dec	80 hrs.	<b>Build TBI Alumni Network</b> Update alumni contact information in Gift Works database. Plan and advertise alumni events. Assist with alumni Newsletter in October/November, collecting annual updates from alumni in both the United States and Russia. Support alumni volunteer events (i.e. pizza nights, mass mailing prep nights), enter results from events (data entry in databases), and create follow-up mailings as appropriate.

### **Resource Attainment (10 Hrs)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Est.</b>	<b>Projects and Tasks</b>
ongoing	10 hrs.	<b>Materials Attainment</b> Seek donated materials from private individuals or organization for use in member projects such as educational events and projects around the Fredericks' site.

Summary of hours:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>Percent of total hours</b>
<b>Watershed Assessment &amp; Restoration</b>	540	31.58%
<b>Watershed Education</b>	640	37.43%
<b>Volunteer Rcert. &amp; Supp.</b>	220	12.87%
<b>Member Training</b>	300	17.54%
<b>Resource Attainment</b>	10	0.58%
<b>Total Hours</b>	1710	100.00%

### **Applicant Requirements:**

- Must be a U.S. Citizen, U.S. National, or Lawful Permanent Resident Alien of the U.S.
- Must have a minimum of a High School Diploma or GED (higher education degrees are highly recommended).
- Must be a minimum of 18 years or older.
- Must not have a criminal history that precludes the applicant's ability to work with vulnerable populations, such as the youth and elderly.

### **Necessary Skills and Qualifications:**

- Ability to work with local community members, conservation groups and agencies
- Experience organizing events
- Skills facilitating and/or participating in group meetings
- Ability to lay out work tasks, identify resources, focus work and complete tasks on time
- Strong writing skills
- Public speaking and outreach skills
- Independent, highly motivated, and able to meet deadlines with limited supervision
- Passion for the natural environment
- Proficiency using personal computers and Internet
- Ability to travel throughout the region
- Physical ability to perform strenuous activities at high elevations

**Required Position Qualifications:**

- Background in Environmental Studies or related field
- Experience with environmental education and public outreach
- Strong computer, coordination, and organization skills and the ability to work independently
- Experience managing projects and budgets
- Ability to work with people of different cultural backgrounds
- Ability to stay calm and flexible in high stress situations and to exercise sound decision making at all times
- Good driving record and willingness to obtain California class B drivers license

**Pluses:**

- Proficiency with Russian language (speaking and writing)
- Knowledge of Sierra Nevada ecosystems and environmental issues in the Lake Tahoe Basin
- CPR, First Aid, and Lifesaving certification
- Knowledge of political and environmental issues in U.S. and Russia